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THE STUDENT AND HIS CAT

Englished from the Irish of the Ninth Century by Professor Flower,
Irish Lecturer at London University, and printed in his Introduction
to *Dánta Grádha*, an Anthology of Irish Love-poetry of the sixteenth
and seventeenth centuries.

I and Pangar Bán, my cat,
'Tis a like task we are at;
Hunting mice is his delight,
Hunting words I sit all night.

Better far than praise of men,
'Tis to sit with book and pen;
Pangar bears me no ill-will,
He, too, plies his simple skill.

'Tis a merry thing to see
At our tasks how glad are we,
When at home we sit and find
Entertainment to our mind.

Oftentimes a mouse will stray
In the hero's Pangar's way;
Oftentimes my keen thought set
Takes a meaning in its net.

'Gainst the wall he sets his eye,
Full and fierce and sharp and sly;
'Gainst the wall of knowledge I
All my little wisdom try.

When a mouse darts from its den,
O! how glad is Pangar then;
O! what gladness do I prove
When I solve the doubts I love.

So in peace our task we ply,
Pangar Bán, my cat, and I;
In our arts we find our bliss,
I have mine and he has his.

Practice every day has made
Pangar perfect in his trade;
I get wisdom day and night
Turning darkness into light.

From The Scottish Review, Edinburgh.